

CORRESPONDENCE.

Theoretical questions connected with race mixture are now occupying the thoughts of many eugenisists, and if we should succeed in forcing these problems on the attention of politicians many practical difficulties connected with legislation will have to be faced. Race should be a very important element to be taken into consideration in regard to the admission or rejection of immigrants; but how is race to be legally defined or practically recognised? As having a bearing on these important questions the following contribution will doubtless be of interest to our readers, who are invited to send us observations of the same kind from both the British Isles and foreign countries.

L. DARWIN.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON RACE MIXTURE IN HONG-KONG.

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In a colony such as Hong-Kong, which has been British for more than three-quarters of a century, and where the majority of the population are of Chinese race, one would expect to find a certain amount of legislation bearing upon the problem of race mixture, certain laws declaring marriage between certain races invalid or a punishable offence, or at least certain decisions as to the degree of blood making a particular person a member of one race or of another. There is, however, neither legislation nor judicial decision on the question, notwithstanding the fact that there is much legislation granting privileges to, or imposing disabilities on, particular races, such as the Chinese Wills Validation Ordinance 1856, the Regulation of Chinese Ordinance 1888, and the Registration of Persons Ordinance 1916 (from the provisions of which persons of Chinese race were exempted). The nearest approach to such legislation is to be found in the Chinese Partnerships Ordinance 1911 and the Limited Partnerships Ordinance 1912, which impose on the Registrar of Companies the duty of deciding whether a particular partnership can properly be described as a Chinese or a non-Chinese partnership. In these two cases, however, it is probable that the Legislature had in mind partnerships in which the members were of different races, and not the case of a partnership of Eurasians. If a reason is sought for the absence of any such legislation, it will probably be found in the fact that until as recently as 1911 the Eurasian problem did not exist; or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that before that year classification could be effected easily without too close an inquiry into a person's pedigree.

Before 1911 the Eurasians in the colony fell into three distinct groups—the Portuguese, the Chinese and the British. The grouping would depend on many things, the least of which would be the quantum of blood admixture. A man with such a name as Remedios, Xavier, or Silva, who was a Roman Catholic, educated at St. Joseph's College, with relatives in official positions in the neighbouring Portuguese colony of Macao, and who was a member of the Portuguese staff of a British firm, besides being a member of the Club Lusitano, would never be regarded as Chinese, even though he was Oriental in feature and had only a fraction of European blood in his veins. Again, one would have no difficulty in giving a Chinese classification to a half-caste, even though his father were English, who wore Chinese clothes and a queue, who passed under the name of Wong or Chang, who had married according to Chinese

custom a "Kit Fat" (wife) and three concubines, and who after some years' business training in the compradore department of a foreign firm was trading on his own account under a Chinese "hong" name, besides being a member of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

At the same time a Eurasian with an English surname who dressed as a European and lived as such, both in business and in his home life, would not be regarded legally as a Chinese, although his parentage might affect him socially. A change, however, took place in 1911, and events have happened since that date which have gone far to bridge the pre-existing gap between the Chinese and British Eurasian. The revolution in China which took place in that year not only changed China from an Empire to a Republic; it went far towards changing the habits and customs of the better class Chinese, and with them those of the Chinese Eurasian. The first effect was the cutting off of the queue and the adopting of European dress. A further and less obvious effect was the awakening in the pure Chinese of a spirit of nationality which is resulting gradually in forming in their minds the idea that the Eurasian Chinese should no longer be classed as Chinese, or at any rate as the leaders of the Chinese community and the exponents to the British of Chinese thought and sentiment. The year 1911 saw also the establishment of the University of Hong-Kong, which will in time produce pure Chinese with all the bi-lingual advantages which have hitherto enabled the Eurasians to secure a controlling influence in voicing the commercial and other aspirations of the Chinese community. A further stage in bridging the gap has resulted from the war. The liquidation of the German firms resulted in the formation of many new firms bent on capturing the trade formerly handled by the subjects of the Central Powers. These new firms are mainly Eurasian, but their members have in many instances found it commercially politic to discard their Chinese names for English ones. War profits have, moreover, caused a change in the style of living in many who formerly were undoubtedly Chinese Eurasians. The race problem has been brought into existence, and there are not lacking signs that it will have to be faced by the Legislature. When it is faced we may feel sure that it will be dealt with in that broad and sympathetic spirit which has won for the British race the right to act as trustees and law-givers for hundreds of millions of Asiatic and African people. At the same time it will not be easy—to give an imaginary case—to classify Major Long of Eton, Corpus and the Rifle Brigade, and his father, Mr. Leung, the chairman of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and ex-representative of the Chinese community on the Legislative Council.

Dr. Crew's paper, "A Biologist in a New Environment," which appeared in the October issue of the EUGENICS REVIEW, has called forth several replies, which will be published in the April number.